

The Spirit

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Schedule Changes for the Fall Semester

By Adriana Dibenedetto

Imagine this: It's one of the most stressful times of the year. We know it's coming, and yet it still has the ability to have us making whale noises at our computer screens for indeterminable amounts of time. We worry about money, appointments, time we thought we had, and now our class schedule for the upcoming semester.

The majority of courses for the fall semester will begin August 31, 2015 and end on December 22, 2015. Additionally, Common Hour has been rescheduled from starting at 12:40 P.M. to 12:55 P.M.

Professors and informed students may have mentioned this new change in passing, and here it is. A new schedule! There may have been a quiet confusion and mild surprise when you logged in to WebAdvisor to see that the times on all of the courses changed. Maybe you thought it was a mistake at first, but nope, it's here to stay!

If you happen to be familiar with the CUNY schedule, St. Joseph's College will now be adhering to the same one. This will not be too major a change from what we al-

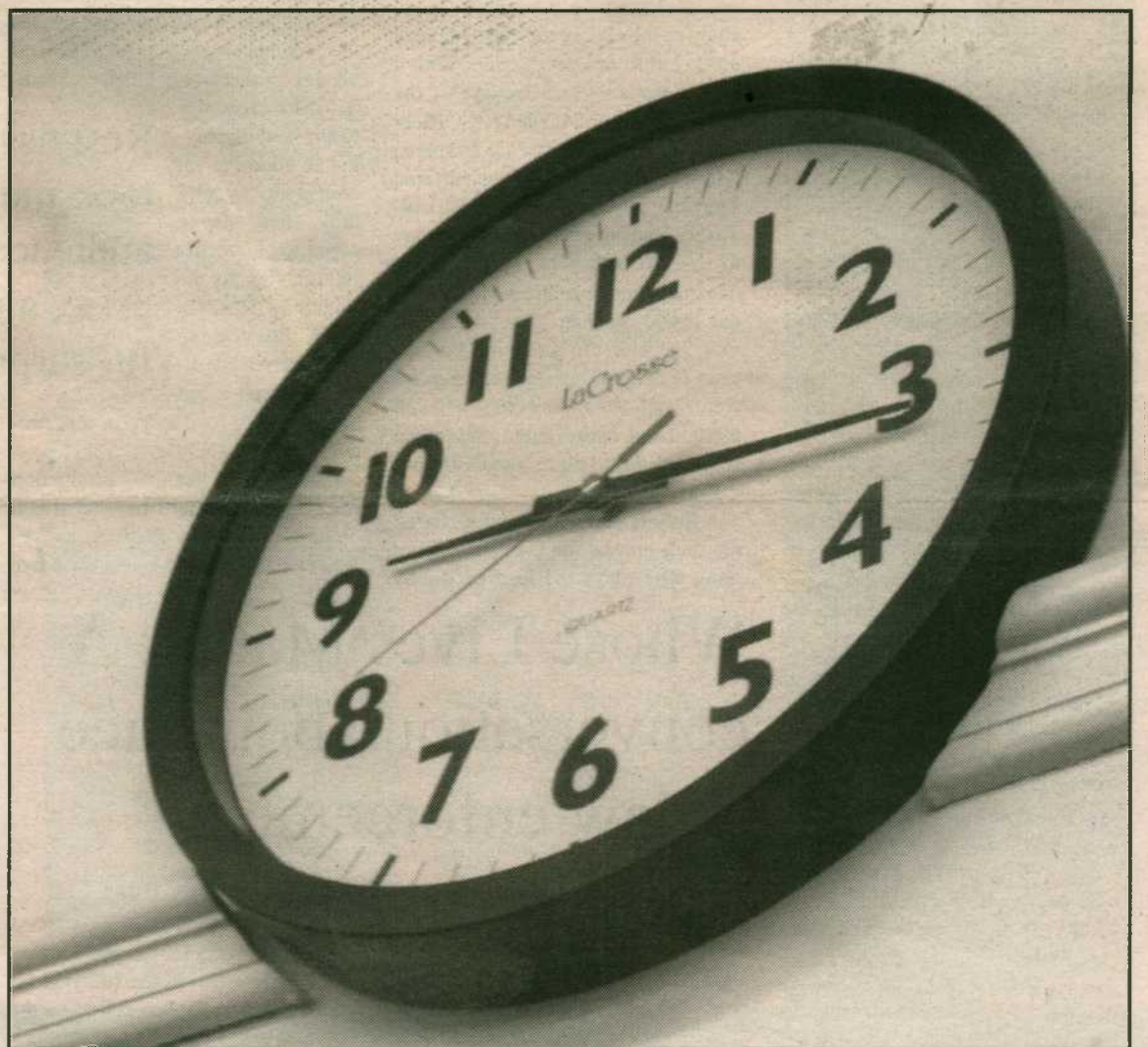
ready know.

Naturally, change is not so easily welcomed and may take some time to be adjusted. One student at the Senate meeting said, "None of the students even asked for it."

The one thing most students want to know is why?

In a Senate meeting with the Student Government Association, Ana Medrano-Dorta from Registrar addressed the schedule changes saying that, "it is in compliance with the federal government." Other public schools maintain a 15-week semester, and SJC will now be more uniform with those colleges, as well as the week that Spring Break occurs. Most of the student-teacher population at SJC preferred a consistency with the public schools' schedule.

Most importantly, the new schedule now creates more opportunities for more classes. The Spirit has previously reported on a lack of classes available on the Brooklyn campus with some students forced to take classes on the Patchogue campus. "[The new schedule] forces chairpersons to make room for more classes," says Ms. Medrano-Dorta, "If you felt that there was not any variance, now is the opportunity to change that."



TUMBLR

New Club: Students for Justice in Palestine

By MICHELLE DARRIS

There is a new club at St. Joseph's College!

"If you want to start your own club, just be passionate and willing to devote time," advises Lisa Gagliardo, president of the newly established Students for Justice in Palestine club at SJC. As a freshman advocating for Palestinian equality, Lisa started SJP to raise awareness for the issue.

"It's a global organization," she says, emphasizing that she isn't the founder of Students for Justice in Palestine collectively, but is the organizer of the SJP chapter here at St. Joseph's Col-

lege. "There are chapters all around the country and in all of the CUNY schools, so I wanted to bring SJP to our campus too."

So in February of this year, she turned her idea into a reality. She collected 10 signatures to show that there was an interest in the club and presented the form to the student government. After getting the form approved, she then wrote a constitution for the club and after that had been approved by the student government and administration, the Students for Justice in Palestine became one of the many clubs offered at St. Joseph's College.

The Students for Justice in Palestine club works to raise awareness for the people of in-

digenous resistance. SJP adopts the principles of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, a global campaign supporting nonviolence and challenging Israeli violence against Palestinians. SJP also stands behind Palestine becoming one democratic state in which everyone is equal. Because the club is a recent startup, there is no regular meeting schedule yet. But if you are interested in joining the Students for Justice in Palestine, club president Lisa Gagliardo can be contacted through her email, lgagliardo2@student.sjcnj.edu.



Letter From the Editor



Jessica Jacobbe

There are many groups and clusters at SJC. As human beings, we have an innate desire to belong to something. It's our responsibility to find our own team that will help us grow and become who we are. This May issue is comprised of many stories about inspiring and passionate students at SJC who have chosen to create change for themselves and the people around them.

Behind these articles, however, are a group of students that have also found their own voice through the newspaper. I have worked with these staff writers for the past year, and it has become one of the best years for "The Spirit" because of them. As we close up our last issue of the year and my own college career, there is nothing left for me to do but thank them.

There is no exaggeration when I say that "The Spirit" has been my life for the past four years. I did not join any other club because I just liked being called "staff writer" too much. I stayed in the meetings because we would talk about anything and everything, while also managing to get shit done.

There is no greater motivation than being with people who love what they do. In some scientific explanation that I could not understand, there is an energy that happens that feeds off other people who are excited about something. This feeling is unexplainable, but can only be understood when you experience it. I had this feeling being on "The Spirit". There is nothing greater when a new person joins the team, and you can clearly see that she loves what she does. The corner glass room that we call our Publications Office was my home base, and the setting for the start of many friendships.

I encourage everyone to go make their own thing. It's about time that "The Spirit" had some competition. Go create, discover new people, and build something bigger than yourself. I did not call myself a "writer" when I came to college, let alone an "Editor-in-Chief." It's that feeling when you first see your name in print for the first time that cannot be replicated. Life is just to keep chasing that feeling again and again. We all want to recreate that feeling of getting that college acceptance letter in the mail, earning our first dollar, or finding a piece of ourselves in a friend. I found that in "The Spirit."

Chapel Players Takes You to Urinetown

A Review of the Spring Production

By ALESSANDRA LANNO

If you have seen the production of Urinetown, you will understand that the name does not give the attention or even the appeal it deserves.

Yes, Chapel Players has done it again! With a talented cast and crew, you couldn't help yourself to laugh along to the cheesy yet clever humor portrayed in this production. With a brief synopsis given by one of the characters in Act 1 Scene 1, Officer Lockstock (played by Eric Kramer), it describes that a town has suffered a terrible 20 year drought which ultimately leads to people having to pay to use the bathroom. Now at first, one questions how this play will turn out based on that. Rest assured, it took me and the audience by surprise (a delightful surprise) when we were lead to a play full of well thought out satire about capitalism followed with strong vocals by our wonderful leads.

A truly talented actor with charisma both on and off the stage, Elliot Sang who plays the lead of Bobby



Photo Credit: Robert Napolitano

Strong, showed how a quirky character can derive ambition in the tiniest of ways. Along his side comes the female lead Hope Cladwell played by the lovely Chelsea Medina. Showing her charm and displaying an adorable yet confident young lady, her strong soprano vocals brought her to the limelight. Hand in hand, Elliot Sang and Chelsea Medina exhibited a fun and effective love story in this production.

This marked the final production for seniors who will be very much missed by Chapel Players. Kelsey Jenkeleit, playing the ever-so naive

and bubbly young girl Little Sally, really did portray what a little girl living in a capitalistic society would act or think. Exhibiting childlike optimism and a colorful personality,

she also provided humor that brought the audience into a fit of laughter. As I mentioned before, Eric Kramer played Officer Lockstock, an intimidating and tough police officer who enforces

the rules of urination regulations. With strong vocals and great storytelling, he was a delight to watch.

The production of course wouldn't be without the creative direction of director Tom Hoefner, who did a

Rest assured, it took me and the audience by surprise, a delightful surprise...

great job of bringing all the elements of what a great play production should have. Ear pleasing harmonies and toe-tapping dance numbers wouldn't be without the help of musical director Scott A. Battaglia and choreographer Jamie Vacca-Hoefner. All views, ideas, and directions of these directors helped bring the cast and crew to exhibit a wonderful show.

Overall, it was an excellent presentation of what a school production should display. The cast and crew of Chapel Players displayed humor and talent that an original play production would show. I advise many students to see the next production, as I assure they will not disappoint.

Whose Lives Matter: A conversation about race & law enforcement

By REBECCA PEELER

On April 15, 2015, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams was a guest speaker and member of a panel, along with the chairs of Criminal Justice Department, Dr. Joseph Pascarella, and Journalism and New Media Studies, Dr. Theodore Hamm. Dr. Charlyn Hilliman, assistant professor of criminal justice was also present, while Dr. Raymond D'Angelo, chair of the social sciences, moderated the event.

Adams commenced the discussion by asking, "What's wrong with policing?" In recent times, New York City's policing policy, Stop and Frisk, has profiled young black and/or brown males. Only recently has this practice been ruled unconstitutional. Adams provides a solution to his initial query claiming, "It's not a complicated conversation. The role of the police officer is to correct conditions, and when that

police officer leaves the precinct he leaves with his tool box full of methods of how do you correctly condition, depending on where they are policing they use every tool in the box to correct the condition, but when they police communities of color or when they police in economically challenging communities they come with just one tool, the hammer."

Adam's conclusion seems to be true in light of recent events, with yet another police-involved shooting of an unarmed black male. Walter Scott, 50, was shot in the back multiple times, as he was fleeing Officer Michael Slager, 33. A bystander recorded the entire incident. This contradicts Slager's original police report. Slager claimed to have acted in defense and accused Scott of reaching for his taser. This past summer, Officer Daniel Pantaleo placed Eric Garner, a lifelong Staten Island resident, in an illegal chokehold. The chokehold caused Garner to fall into cardiac arrest, sadly resulting in his death. Although a bystander filmed this fatal incident a grand jury did not indict Pantaleo.

The media and entertainment have portrayed a black-and-white dynamic of "good equals cop" and "bad equals man or woman in question." We as a society want and need to



Photo Credit: Rebecca Peeler

have faith in the police system and want to believe that our best interest is always at heart. While this blind faith may be evident within certain demographics and communities, those from a lower economic bracket or those of color often do not experience this dynamic.

During Adam's speech, he pointed out that police officers "leave their precinct with a box full of tools," implying that officers are properly being trained for many different scenarios. When it comes to policing certain economically-challenged

neighborhoods or communities of color only the "hammer" is used. The need to use excessive force within these communities has somehow come to be a norm.

These reoccurring shootings must be looked at a failure in the training of these police officers. It is a failure in the mental screening process, and a failure to follow up with check-ups and continuous monitoring, as well as a failure on the general public if we allow matters to progress in this manner.

Word Around Campus: What is the greatest lesson you've learned in your college career?



Gabriella Barone '15
Speech Pathology

"The greatest thing I've learned in my college career is to learn to have passion. If you have passion and set your mind to something you can achieve it, regardless of how big or small it is. If you have faith in yourself and all your abilities, you can make it possible."



Victoria LoBosco '15
Mathematics

"The greatest things I've learned are time management and learning how to get things done on time by making a schedule for myself. Through my four years, I've learned how to efficiently do work or talk to professors."



Erica Carrasquillo '15
Biology

"Time management. That's seriously a big thing. I didn't perfect it yet, though. Also, have an open mind. I came [into college] thinking I'm going to take all science classes, I don't want to learn about anything else. Then we had to take liberal arts classes like ethics and sociology, which broadens your horizon. I think that was good. I wouldn't have thought about that on my own."



David Louison '15
Criminal Justice

"The greatest thing I learned in my college career is to be. That's it. Just to do whatever you want to do, explore, have an open mind. Try new things and get out of your comfort zone. Just live, and whatever feels right, just go with it."



Hayley Aguilar '15
Child Study

"You plan to do college a certain way and you're going to graduate in four years, which is what I was trying to do. But then your plans don't always go the same way. For example, I was set to graduate this year, but I'm going to graduate next year because I took a semester off to work at Disney, but I have no regrets. That was the best experience of my life."

The Controversy of the Common Core Curriculum

By DANIELA CARDINALE

The Common Core initiative was aimed at helping students learn the skills that they would need in the future. Before this was implemented and adopted by the states, there was no country wide system.

Many parents and teachers are not sure whether this system is doing what it was supposed to.

"In theory the common core sounds great. Everyone is aligned to one standard so the country is at par now. What this does is it puts education into a box.

[Students] have been taught a different way and now suddenly the way they were being taught is changed.

It is hard to teach only a narrow amount of things to pass and really doesn't give the students a chance to learn. This does an injustice to both the educators and our youth," says L. Broderick, a teacher.

It is especially hard for students who are in junior high or high school. They

have been taught a different way and now suddenly the way they were being taught is changed. Even though children learn easily, they need time as well.

"Holding students to a standard all of a sudden in the ninth grade is wrong because this forces them to relearn everything they have been taught and then expect them to pass these test and if they don't they fail or do bad and that is unfair to the students," says Allison Satnick, a high school teacher.

Students are now taking two tests on a three day

basis. These were conducted recently and many parents and students were upset because it was not what they were expecting. It was an even bigger issue for students who are ESL or have learning challenges.

"I didn't even know half the answers. The questions were so unclear and it was way too long," says one fourth grader.

Teachers are suddenly being asked to change the way they teach. Also if they do not follow the regulations properly their jobs are on the line, because this test will be an evaluation for

them. Therefore not only are the students stressed but the teachers are also, so how is that an environment in which children are supposed to learn?

Some students have also begun to opt out of the taking the test. Many parents and teachers are stepping up and protesting, who do not want their children's education to be put at risk.

From the Desk of the President

As my days as your SGA President are coming to a close, I find myself having mixed emotions. I never thought four years ago that I would be sitting here, today, as the Student Government Association President of one the best institutions in Brooklyn. St. Joseph's College has taught me endless lessons, has given me endless opportunities and most importantly, extended my family. It has been a privilege to serve you as your advocate, friend, mentor and SGA President.

At Investiture every student is introduced to the College's five foundational pillars: integrity, intellectual and spiritual values, social responsibility and service, with the hope that each of us will graduate with these values firmly in hand. Serving as SGA president this year has truly painted the picture of not only how I live with these values, but also how the SJC community as a WHOLE is built on a foundation, which forms the basis for everything we do.

We have over 30 clubs and organizations on campus, which I have had the opportunity to work closely with. From hosting guest speakers, devoting hours to community service, or competing as a proud bear, this college wouldn't be the same without these amazing students. Our dedicated Club Presidents, E-board members and Advisors have all worked hard so hard in enriching our SJC experiences.

SGA has created a club system broken into five categories, Academic, Art, Multicultural, Greek &

Social and Service & Religious organizations. Every group has a SGA advisor as well as a Student Life staff advisor. Each month SGA awards a club that has done an outstanding job making their club mission into a reality. This reward system began in the Spring Semester, with each month having a specific theme to their award. The following were our Club of the Month Recipients:

February: Poder Latino
Award: Perfect Club Binder

Poder Latino's binder contained all of the required materials. Forms were easily accessed and placed in the correct sections of the binder. Not only did their binder receive the highest grade in binder evaluation, but they also fulfilled the event and attendance requirements set by SGA.

March: Recreation Club
Award: The Achievement Award

Recreation Club was awarded for their club achievement during the month on February. Their ALS event was a clear depiction of how hard they work to give back to not only the SJC community but also those affected with a disabling condition. This event was a huge success not only filling the room with students, faculty and staff, but the halls as well!

April: Science Club
Award: The SPARK Award

The Science Club seeks to heighten the understanding and awareness of developments in science and the health-related fields. The Science Club has participated in blood drives, hosted lectures and even taught us how to transform a simple plastic container into an awesome handcrafted gift! They were awarded for constantly going above and beyond in educating, entertaining and adding that SPARK to our campus!

Our Club of The Year award goes to Social Thinkers!! Social Thinkers is a club that goes above and beyond in bringing new ideas to our campus. They have hosted and showcased a vast variety of social issues we are facing in our daily lives. Social Thinkers organized events that shined light on issues such as world hunger, race, sexism, and ended the year with a great Sexual Assault Awareness campaign. President Kristina Hernandez and her awesome Executive Board brought not only new ideas to our campus, but resources and influential models in our community. Social Thinkers has hosted the following:

- "The Silent War" presented by Annie Le an NYU graduate student surfaced issues on gender-based violence and feminism.

- Guest Speaker from NYC Coalition Against Hunger, Gabrielle Dann-Alle who presented insight on world hunger issues and how to help solve them.

- Documentary Film Screening: - "A Place at the Table"

Sexual Assault Awareness week:

- The Hunting Ground- A documentary about Sexual Assault on college campuses.

- "Love Should Not Hurt. You Have a Voice" a presentation from Commissioner Rose Pierre- Louis from the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence

- "Denim Day" college wide event as we wore jeans to protest against victim-blaming in Sexual Assault cases. Followed by a Self Defense Workshop presented by The Center for Anti Violence Education.

Thank you to Social Thinkers for going above any beyond in bringing new ideas and methods in spreading awareness of these serious social issues. Social Thinkers has been a role model for all club on campus and SGA is proud to honor you as Club of the Year!

This reward system and new structure is one of my proudest accomplishments as SGA President. We have gone through

numerous changes and it has always been a priority to encourage our clubs and organizations grow and prosper. This is our way in providing extra support and structure to guarantee success.

My journey has been filled with opportunities, fun times, great memories and challenges that have shaped me into who I am today. My time here has been such a memorable one! I have grown from a scared Freshman into a bold Senior that is eager and willing to take on challenges head on. I have moved from Sophomore Class Representative to Campus Activities Board Special Programs Coordinator to SGA President. The love that I have for this college is endless and it has been a privilege and honor to serve as YOUR SGA President. I thank you all for having your patience with me, for being my strength and for your endless support. It's hard to say goodbye, but I know my time here has been well spent. So thank you to my Student Leaders, the Student Life Staff, Administration, Faculty and of course my amazing SJC family and friends who have been by my side from day one! Lastly, I leave you with words Warren Bennis once said, "Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality," so hold on to your dreams, stay dedicated and never lose your passion! May God bless you in your journey and may all your dreams come true.

Farewell,
Sabrina Gargano
Student Government Association
President
2014 - 2015



SJC Student Life



Spring Break in Nicaragua: How to Create Change and Love

By GRACE CHAMOUN

Prior to packing our bags and leaving for Central America on Friday, April 3, 2015, the word "ineffable" was nothing more than a simple adjective. Upon our return, eight days later, this word became the only thing that I could think of when attempting to explain how utterly amazing of an experience this trip was.

St. Joseph's College, along with the unwavering efforts of our alumni, has funded a school out in Subtiava, Nicaragua for the past few years. The pre-school, which is named San Jose after St. Joseph's, is located in one of the most impoverished areas in the state. Being that Nicaragua is the second poorest country in Central America, this school does not receive nearly enough money from the government. It is through our school's efforts and fundraising that the teacher's salary gets paid and the students get taught.

Upon our arrival in Managua, we took a bus to the capital city of Grenada. We checked in to our hostel, La Libertad, and then were taken on a walking tour of this historic city by our amazing guide, Jimmy. Grenada is one of Nicaragua's most important cities, both politically and economically. It is rich in colonial heritage, "which is evident in its architecture," and was

named by Hernández de Córdoba (after whom the currency of the country is named after, as well.) Grenada's sister city, León, was our second destination after feeding monkeys, diving in to Lake Nicaragua, and hiking up Volcán Mombacho.

León is Nicaragua's second largest city, after Managua. Similar to Grenada, León has been the focal point of many political and intellectual endeavors. It is the center for many industrial, agricultural, and commercial outlets and is the home to Central America's second oldest university, National Autonomous University of Nicaragua (UNAN). In the Parque Central of this beautiful city, an amazing mural resided on the side of the building that embodied the brutal history of the Nicaraguan Sandinista movement but represented the progress and bright future that would one day hopeful come for the people of this country.

As we left from JFK, Professor Petriano said, "Nicaragua is the kind of country that will get under your skin," and those words could not have possibly been any truer. The events that our group experienced were utterly life changing. Fergie Cantos, a third-year student at our Brooklyn Campus, agreed to sponsor a beautiful little girl named Belinda. By doing so, Fergie took on the responsibility to pay for Belinda's education and cover many other expenses for her throughout the years of her life. Belinda's mother, Darling, who was 8-months pregnant during our trip, gave birth to a gorgeous and healthy baby girl who she named Fergie, out of appreciation and in honor for SJC's outstanding student and my amazing friend.

We were able to meet a great young man named Claudio that our school's Poder Latino club has been sponsoring for the past six years. He

is now a college student studying agricultural sustainability and radiates the brightest energy. His mother greeted us all with the most compassionate of hugs and gave the president of Poder Latino, Leticia Salazar, a beautiful gift to represent her gratitude.

We ate the most delicious food during our stay, such as fresh fish on the beach, quite possibly the juiciest mangoes known to mankind, and chimichurri over mouth watering steak. We showered with lizards and spiders, were consistently covered in sweat and dirt, and slept in a room with two small fans, one big bed, and six incredible girls. We spent our free time meeting the most influential people, such as Terencio Javier Lozano Casco. Introduced to this young man while trying to buy some handmade bracelets in León, he immediately shared his story of how during his fifth attempt in trying to get into the United States he fell off of a train in Mexico and lost both of his legs. He described the depression that engulfed him for two years and empowered us with how he made it an effort to fight for and resurrect his happiness.

We marched up church stairs and were taken away by the view of the city from the church's roofs and held on for our lives on the edges of buses as we toured the country, going from place to place. The most life changing view, however, was not one that attracted most other tourists. It was being exposed to the living conditions of most Nicaraguans that was the most emotional sight we saw. Homes lacking indoor plumbing, plastic garbage bags replacing roofs, rodent infestations plaguing entire communities, children playing barefooted and embellished with tarnished clothing were the most humbling sights that we laid eyes on.

This trip was beyond words. Although our students and staff traveled with the

intentions of helping, giving, and donating, what we received in return was significantly more precious. And with that, I leave you with the words of Mother Teresa: "It is not how much we give but how much love we put into giving." You may not be able to change the world right now, but you can change someone's life and better someone's day with the simply gift of compassion, empathy, and appreciation.

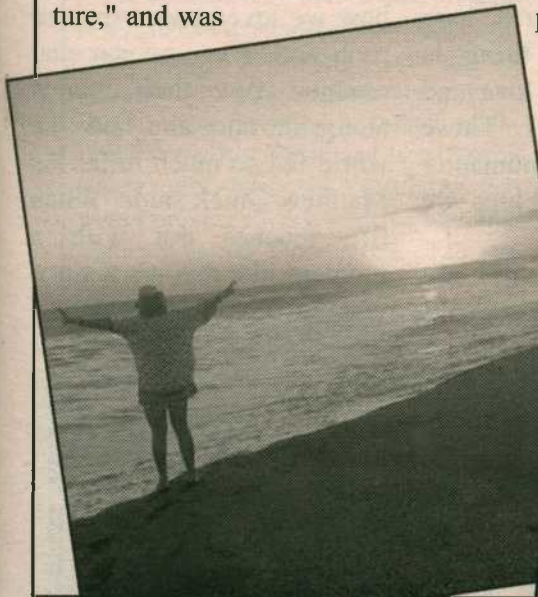


Photo Credit: Grace Chamoun



Students Embrace Humility and Happiness at the Jersey Shore

By MARY EDWARD

I want to let you know that we've thoroughly embraced the fact that most people think we're crazy when we tell them how we spent our Spring Break. We've gotten pretty used to trying to answer the "Why?" that usually comes after the "Wait...you do what now?"

Why is that even a thing? Why on earth were we so happy? The truth is, most of us can only try to begin to answer these questions until we find that there really are no words that would be fit to describe how we feel.

This past April, a group of twenty-one students from Brooklyn and Patchogue as well as three staff members opted to go on an Alternative Spring Break. At Camp Evans Volunteer Housing Center in the Jersey Shore we partnered with members of Break a Difference, a program that focuses specifically on Alternative Spring Breaks in the Jersey Shore. At three different work sites we manually broke apart concrete, loaded the pieces into dumpsters, applied sheetrock, built furniture and painted walls.

The damage caused by Hurricane Sandy three years ago is still very much there. This disaster happened in our very own state and affected many of our friends, families

and acquaintances. Yet, it is a forgotten cause. The victims of Sandy felt as though they were abandoned mere months after the hurricane took away any sense of normalcy. Like with many disasters, everyone went on with their lives while they were left to try to salvage what was left of theirs. They felt

abandoned and the only way they could get help was through volunteers.

One Hurricane Sandy victim told us, "I know we live in a bad, bad world, and we are surrounded by negative things, but in the end, besides our faith, all we have is each other." We take people for granted and I confess

that I frustratingly find myself saying that I hate people often. The thing is hope, compassion, love and human interactions. These are what make up humanity and they are the things we live for.

We probably will not remember everything we said or did that week. But we

will remember how we felt, how we loved and respected each and every person that reached out their hands alongside ours and how the world felt so much fuller. As Matthew Quick said, "When life reaches out with a moment like this it's a sin if you don't reach back."



Photo Credit: Megan Wenzler

I'll Have My Coffee With a Side of Communism, Please!

By ADRIANA DIBENEDETTO

"Nothing ever happens in Ridgewood," I sigh.

Probably the most boring place on the face of the Earth. A never-ending slab of gummy concrete with nothing but crooked 'for rent' signs in the windows... but wait, what is this? Is this the real life, or is this just fantasy?

No, it's true!

A new venue has appeared, and it's definitely a place I will be wasting all that remains of my free time.

Topos Bookstore Cafe has emerged from this town's gray palette like a phoenix! Okay, so, maybe not a phoenix, but a small adorable

She was "just ecstatic that there was finally someplace nice around here..."

bird with less flamboyant colors, and with a great deal of promise.

Conveniently situated right near the M train, Topos is located at 788 Woodward Avenue, between Putnam Avenue and Madison Street in Ridgewood, Queens, and is owned by three amiable individuals named Cosmo, Anny, and Benjamin. It's super

cozy, and the coffee is good. Rows of books adorn the walls, ranging from children's books, to biographies on jazz musicians, to Communism, and visitors are welcome to have a read and relax with a nice, reasonably-priced, hot cup of coffee and a pastry. If you like the book you've started browsing, you can buy it, and Topos will even buy your old used books if you bring them in.

The place is seemingly always busy, but its patrons are always respectfully quiet; it is a bookstore, after all. One young woman who I photo-bombed at the cafe while she was taking a selfie told me that she was "just ecstatic that there was finally someplace



Photo Credit: Adriana Dibenedetto

nice around here... They've got some good, weird, books, and it's just a calm, nice little place to be."

The bookstore section of Topos has been open since the beginning of January 2015, but the cafe was only just recently finished in the beginning of February. Each of their little spotted mugs was handmade by a very talented lady named Betty

Roytburd. You can see her progress making them on her Instagram page @bettyceramix. (<https://instagram.com/bettyceramix/>) You can check out their Facebook page for updates on events and guest readings as well. (<https://www.facebook.com/toposbookstore>)

The Latest MTA Fare Hike: Problems and Solutions

By JOSEPH GUZMAN

On March 22, 2015, the MTA's bus and subway fare hikes took effect. The price for a single ride increased from \$2.50 to \$2.75. In addition, the prices of the 30-Day Unlimited Ride MetroCard and the 7-Day Unlimited Ride MetroCard will rise respectively to \$116.50 and \$31. Increases in fares are set to take hold continually over the next two years. This was the fifth fare hike implemented by the MTA in eight years, and has occurred despite the fact that subway service has gotten worse.

Given the poor state of subway service, it is absurd that subway users should have to pay more money to travel via public transit. According to a report by the Straphangers Campaign, the MTA has a debt of \$34 billion, which is more than several countries, and is paid off with fare revenues. The combination of this enormous amount of debt and a \$15 billion-gap in the MTA's 2015-2019 capital plan will lead to even higher fare hikes.

The burden of the MTA's debt problem is a result of mismanagement of its own funds, and its budget gap should not fall upon the shoulders of daily commuters. Due to these factors, city council members Ydanis Rodriguez and Inez Barron have recently proposed a resolution that would provide CUNY students with free MetroCards like those provided to elementary and high school students.

Rodolph Mesadieu '16 said, "[It is a] great initiative if schools provided MetroCards, and a huge financial burden off of the shoulders of students." Anika Adams '18 feels that college students should receive free MetroCards because it would "help us save hundreds of dollars."

All other commuters will still need to endure the unfair fare hikes that the MTA plans to implement over the next two years (including graduated college students faced with a mountain of debt).

Perhaps the MTA can solve its financial issues internally. The MTA should use its money more wisely. The completion of the Fulton Center subway station which reopened this past November took seven

more years to complete than anticipated and costs \$1.4 billion instead of \$750 million. It includes a huge "sky reflecting" dome, video art installations, and commercial and dining spaces. At the same time, stations in poor neighborhoods are lucky to get repainted.

In the end, New Yorkers will need to make their voices heard in order to prevent forthcoming fare hikes. They can do this through a variety of methods including petitions, protests, a boycott, or a combination thereof. No matter which strategy is pursued, it is clear that the fare increases are troublesome, especially considering the service provided. Hopefully, New Yorkers will eventually take action and not only prevent further increases, but lead to future fare reductions.

This was the fifth fare hike implemented by the MTA in eight years, and has occurred despite the fact that subway service has gotten worse.

Joseph Guzman

Deadpool On Course for The Silver Screen

By DANIELA CARDINALE

As they say, better late than never.

Making a late grand entrance is better than awkwardly stumbling into a room, especially when it comes to Marvel characters, especially when you're an anti-hero invited to a superhero party. Deadpool may be the last character invited to the Marvel party, but he sure is making it one hell of an event to remember.

Deadpool is set to release in theatres on February 16, 2016. The only catch is that filming for the movie began on March 19 in Toronto. That leaves Marvel with less than a year to film, edit, promote, and distribute it.

But what will Deadpool have that none of the other movies can compete with?

Ryan Reynolds and rated R glory, of course. On April 1st, Reynolds announced in a fake April Fools' interview prank with Mario Lopez that the movie would be rated R. This occurred after Reynolds had angered fans by tweeting that the film would be PG-13 although he had stated that there had been a lot of yelling over this.

It wasn't always this safe.

For over six years, hype for the infamous Marvel character's movie has been spiked by an online leak of the original draft script. The overwhelmingly positive reaction from users online was enough for movie executives to take notice of the buzz and investigate the potential Deadpool's character had to make it in the superhero movie franchise. However, studios were

frightened to pursue funding a movie for Deadpool for two reasons; the lack of Deadpool's mass appeal and the rating system.

The mass appeal issue was solved after Marvel performed a test run of sorts by casting Ryan Reynolds as Deadpool in X-Men Origins: Wolverine (2009). With Twentieth Century Fox Film Corp. acting as the distributor, the movie made over \$373 million globally, \$179 million of which was made domestically. Although Ryan Reynolds' portrayal of Deadpool was a depressingly poor one, scriptwriters were pressured to tone down Deadpool's personality. Popularly known for foul jokes, inappropriate humor, and creating havoc & committing unrealistic acts of violence, this atrocity of a portrayal was able to stir up more controversy not only online, but throughout entertainment news outlets across the country, bringing Deadpool front, but not center.

Thing was no one seemed to truly understand his character enough to commit to the task of casting, producing, and directing a movie. To Fox and Marvel studios, Deadpool was just another character they thought could be used to fill in the gaps, to provide a side story for other characters, but never gamble all their money on out of fear of not faring well financially and ongoing legal issues.

We'll just have to wait and see whether Deadpool turns out to be the life of the party or the first anti-hero kicked to the curb.

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COLOPHON

colophon (noun): a brief statement containing information about the publication of a book

The May 2015 issue of "The Spirit Newspaper" has been fueled by the following:

48 hours without sleep; a gold membership to Starbucks; free pizza at Common Hour; BuzzFeed quizzes and 2 jars of Nutella; staff meetings that could have been emails; *Real Housewives of Beverly Hills*; the Dragonborn theme from Skyrim; Beyonce's cover of "The Beautiful Ones" by Prince at Glastonbury 2011; 13 bad hair days in 3 weeks; the possibility that a Freshman bored in class is thinking of joining the college newspaper

The Yik Yak Attack

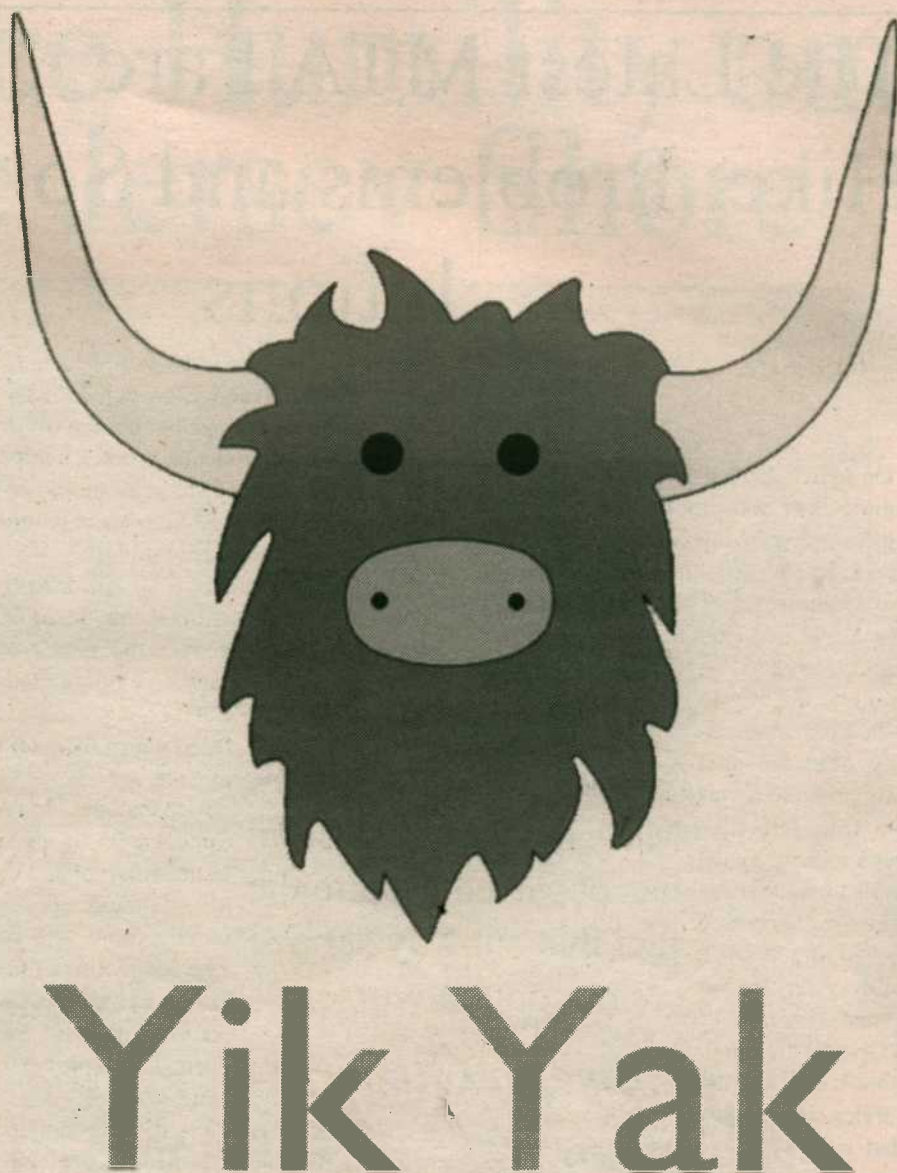
By BRIANNA TODMAN

With the emergence of the new social media app Yik Yak, the app that allows you to anonymously post view or comment on "Yaks" from others within a 10 mile radius of you, college students everywhere are sharing their stories. This app has gained popularity largely on college campuses because it's intended for concentrated areas of a large number of people. College students share their similar struggles regarding anything from grades, to parties, to not getting enough sleep. But the reason for Yik Yak's popularity besides the anonymity is probably because the funniest "Yaks" get posted on other social media sites like Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, and Instagram, prompting those without the app to download it. Yaks like, "College is a piece of cake. Except the cake is on fire and you don't have any arms or legs... or mouth," gain thousands of likes and popularity among college students who can all relate. Yik

Yak has become a place where students share their thoughts and feelings with thousands of users.

There are some drawbacks to this app, though. Due to the anonymity of the app users can post death threats or false attacks. For instance, last year a student posted a Yak threatening to blow up a school and that high school had to be evacuated the next day; luckily it was a false alarm. Teens and young adults can use this platform in other negative ways such as slut shaming or just bullying others, which we know is more likely to happen when the attacker's identity is hidden.

Yik Yak has dominated large college campuses and other social media sites, mostly giving people something to laugh at or an interesting story to read. Though as with anything with the good comes the bad. As Yik Yak makes it easier to share common interests and feelings it also makes it easier for students to cyberbully and to post school shooting threats.



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